



Department of Transport and Planning

GPO Box 2392
Melbourne, VIC 3001 Australia
www.transport.vic.gov.au

Your ref: COR 2023 002868
Our ref: LV1411-11587

Coroner Ingrid Giles
Coroners Court of Victoria
65 Kavanagh Street
SOUTHBANK VIC 3006

By email only: [REDACTED]

Dear Coroner Giles

FINDING INTO DEATH WITHOUT INQUEST - RHIANNON CHARLOTTE DRAKE

I refer to your request dated 19 March 2026 made pursuant to section 73(1A) of the Coroners Act 2008 (**Finding**) to the Department of Transport and Planning (**Department**) in conjunction with **Fulton Hogan** give consideration to:

1. Limiting hours for conducting slashing/mowing operations to avoid daily peak hour period(s); and
2. Mandating the use of a single electronic variable messaging sign on all Category 3 routes in Victoria.

Response

I provide the below statement in response to your Findings as follows:

Limiting hours for conducting slashing/mowing operations to avoid daily peak hour period(s)

The Coroner's recommendation is unable to be implemented.

Restricting slashing or mowing operations to avoid daily peak periods is not always operationally practical on rural freeways, as traffic demand is often variable and lacks clearly defined recurring peaks.

Due to the seasonality of the works and the weather dependency, the Department would not be able to meet bushfire fuel reduction and roadside fuel mitigation programs within seasonal timeframes should there be restrictions applied to operational hours. Failure to complete these works as part of the seasonal fluctuation in growth along roadsides would have implications to bushfire preparedness for local communities.

The Department schedules works based on corridor-specific traffic patterns, seasonal demand, and real-time operational risks rather than fixed peak hour restrictions.

Mandating the use of a single electronic variable messaging sign on all Category 3 routes in Victoria

The Coroner's recommendation is unable to be implemented.

The Department proposes that Truck/Trailer Mounted Attenuators (TMAs) fitted with electronic variable message signs (VMS) be required for rural freeway and highway operations such as mowing and slashing, where TMAs are required under the Austroads Guide to Temporary Traffic Management (AGTTM).

On rural freeways and highways, attenuator-mounted VMS units are more operationally viable because they integrate advance warning and impact protection within a single mobile platform. This reduces setup time, limits worker exposure to live traffic, minimises equipment footprint, and provides greater flexibility for short-duration or mobile works in high-speed environments.

Where TMAs are not required under the AGTTM on the arterial road network for mowing and slashing operations, the Department will not deploy single electronic variable messaging signs as mowing operations are short term, weather dependant and mobile worksites. The mobilisation and de-mobilisation of single electronic variable messaging signs creates other safety risks to the traffic management and roadside operations crews.

DTP will share the Coroner's recommendations with Austroads for consideration in any updates to the AGTTM.

Please do not hesitate to contact Aj Armstrong on [REDACTED] or at [REDACTED] if you have any questions about the contents of this letter or if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely



Fiona Green
Executive Director, Road Maintenance Operations

25 / 05 / 2026

Cc: Beth Liley - Executive Director, Gippsland & Capital Delivery
email: [REDACTED]